

February 2026

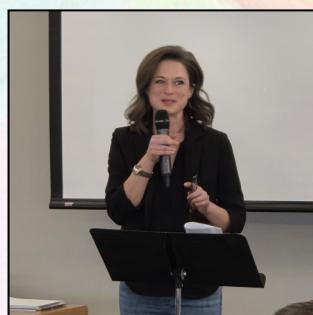
Garden Gleannings

A monthly publication of the Garden Community Church

Rooted in Christ WOMEN'S RETREAT

Around 44 women attended the Women's Retreat on Saturday, February 7th, at the Dyck Arboretum in Hesston. The Women's Ministry brought in Michelle Loss as the speaker for the retreat. Before diving into her watercolor tutorials, Michelle shared a short devotional on Colossians 2:6-7, the key verse for the conference. Michelle began her ministry of Potter & Painter to invite attendees to become the "painter" as they explore lessons from the Potter. Even the "non-artistic" ladies were able to create beautiful art work to help remind them to let your roots grow deep into Christ.

The retreat, "Rooted in Christ" included worship led by the Harvest Church praise team, ice-breaker games and fellowship, painting and of course food! Thanks to the Women's Ministry committee of Kim Kohls, Tonia Busenitz, Carmen Selzer, Denise Goossen & Tayna McCloud for their time and energy spent putting together a fun day for the Women of Garden and Harvest Churches.



Library News

February is a great month to snuggle up with a good book and some hot chocolate. With Valentine's Day and the extra emphasis on Love, we are so thankful that God is the creator of Love and His love for us is never-ending and unconditional. Human love, however, is often not so, and many of the books in the Fiction section show how people grow their relationships with God's help.

Reason to Breathe and *Finding Wings* are two books by Deborah Raney, completing the Chandler Sisters series. Will the sisters be able to accept their father's marriage to a much younger woman after the death of their mother? And is being a caregiver again really something that God has for a sister to do?

Our next Book Club book is *The Attributes of God* by Arthur Pink. Thinking through each Attribute leaves a person overwhelmed with the Love that God has for us!

The Hospitality of Need by Kevan Chandler "is a book about friendship . . . the kind that God has called us to live in . . . friendship that goes deep and flourishes, not in spite of our needs but actually through them."

A couple of the shelves in the Adult Library are being shuffled to make room for more books. So look around if you can't find what you are looking for, or ask me.

~Denise Goossen

The teen library is hosting a winter reading challenge. Pick up your challenge card in the foyer and complete it by March 1st for a prize! Check out the bookshelf in the foyer for new reads, including graphic novels and a new series with horses. The display shelves inside the library have new complete series, including The Vanderbeekers, vol. 1-7.

Two new themed bins have been added to the top shelf in the children's library:

- God Created Seasons: A Snowy Winter
- God Created Seasons: A Butterfly Spring

~Carla Murphy

Annual Business Meeting Meal

The Youth Group served a noon meal prior to the Annual Business meeting on February 1st, which was one week late this year due to the extreme cold and snow that came the weekend it was originally scheduled. The menu was ham, hashbrown potato casserole, green beans, salad, rolls and fruit cobblers for dessert. Special Thank You to Lindley & Kayla Harms, Scott & Amy Vogt and the Middle School and High School Sunday Scholl classes who helped prepare, set and clean up for the delicious meal.



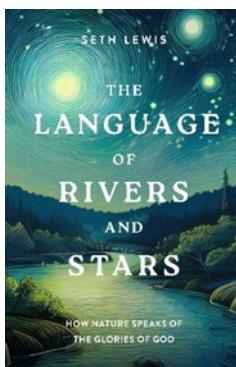
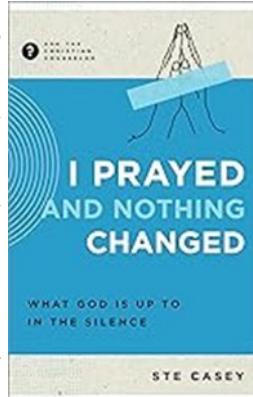
Vannie's Views

This month I'm sharing three books I've read recently that have been especially meaningful and worthy of recommendation during a challenging season of life.

I read *I Prayed and Nothing Changed* by Ste Casey on the plane last November as we traveled to Echo Ranch Bible Camp, where we were scheduled to spend several weeks as winter caretakers. It's a short book, only 144 pages, but rich with Biblical wisdom about what God may be doing in seasons of silence. I highly recommend it.

Our time at Echo Ranch did not unfold as planned. Less than a week into our stay, we received devastating news from home that abruptly brought our time there to an end. Within days, others stepped in to take our place, and we returned home to walk through a season of profound loss.

The weeks that followed have been marked by grief, unanswered prayers, and deep questions about God's purposes—especially when those prayers had been offered faithfully over many years. This book gave me language for that tension (and I read it a second time in January). Ste Casey doesn't rush toward easy answers but gently reminded me that God is still present and purposeful, even when His ways remain hidden and His silence feels heavy.



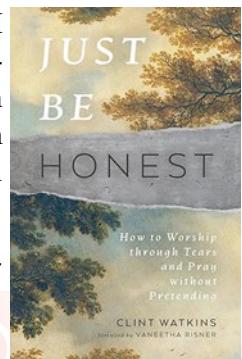
Upon arrival in Alaska, I read *The Language of Rivers and Stars* by Seth Lewis. Experiencing the wild beauty of our setting made the book even more meaningful. Lewis has an unusual and gifted way with words as he describes the many ways creation speaks to us of God's attributes. I found myself saying, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" as he put words to feelings I've often had while enjoying creation but couldn't quite articulate.

The psalmist reminds us, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork... Their voice goes out through all the earth" (Psalm 19:1–4). In this book, Seth Lewis invites the reader to slow down and be freshly amazed at how God designed creation to display His glory.

Finally, I rarely recommend books I haven't yet finished—but I'm making an exception for *Just Be Honest* by Clint Watkins. As I've walked through the challenges of the past months, I've needed words to express the dissonance I've felt. I do trust God, yet I don't always understand what He is doing in my life and in my family right now. It felt unsettling to carry emotions I wasn't sure I could or should express to Him.

Of course, I could have turned to the Psalms (roughly one-third of the Psalms are laments). Still, I picked up this book after reading a review by Vaneetha Risner, and I'm so glad I did. The book includes five chapters on understanding lament, two chapters on corporate lament, and one chapter on how to support those who are lamenting. Though I'm only partway through, it has already been an exceptional reminder that it is okay to struggle and feel sorrow, even while holding firmly to faith in God.

Each of these books, in its own way, reminded me that even in seasons of loss and unanswered questions, God is still speaking, is always present, and is worthy of our trust.





Prayer Calendar and Memory Verse

Memory Verse: Psalm 40:16—*Let all those that seek you rejoice and be glad in you: let such as love your salvation say continually, the Lord be magnified.*

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 Jesus is our advocate. He stands before the throne on our behalf & declares our sins forgiven.	2 Jesus is King. I am to be a loyal, obedient subject, bringing glory to Him.	3 Jesus is the Light of the World. He reveals what is in the darkness & shows us the way.	4 Jesus is our Rock. We stand on Him and He is unshakeable even as our world shakes & rattles.	5 Jesus saves us from what? From the penalty of our sins which is the wrath of God.	6 Jesus is the Promised One. The One who came and who is promised to come again.	7 Jesus is God in the flesh. In seeing Him I see the very character of God.
8 Jesus intercedes for me. He talks to God on my behalf!	9 Jesus is Captain of the Host of the Lord. All of heaven is at His command.	10 Jesus is the answer to every need - healer, strength, redeemer, guide.	11 Jesus is compassionate. He sees & He cares deeply. He cares deeply & He acts.	12 Jesus is my Comforter. He listens to me, comes alongside me, & cares that I hurt.	13 Jesus is my shepherd. He wants to take care of me, protect me, provide for me.	14 Jesus is perfect love. He will do what is best for me, even when it hurts.
15 Jesus is the Good Master. He is worthy of my honor & my obedience.	16 Jesus is my teacher. I study His words to learn about God & how to live.	17 Jesus is the alpha & omega. The beginning of everything & the completion of it all.	18 Jesus is righteous. He is without blemish or spot. He is pure & without error.	19 Jesus is an anchor. He holds me fast and nothing can sweep me away.	20 Jesus is our brother. God is our Father & we are co-heirs with Christ. Think on that!	21 Jesus is my Redeemer. He purchased me out of bondage and set me free.
22 Jesus is the vine. I draw life & strength from Him. I have life only through Him.	23 Jesus is a sanctuary. He is a place of safety and refuge.	24 Jesus is approachable. I can come to Him freely, often, humbly, needy, rejoicing.	25 Jesus is the Lion of Judah. He is fierce, strong, powerful & predicted to be victor over all.	26 Jesus is Judge. He will ultimately make all things right.	27 Jesus is the Bridegroom. We believers are His bride. He will come to take us home & delight in us.	28 Jesus is the Bread of Life. He is my sustenance & I'm completely dependent on Him.
29 Jesus is my Hope. I know the future promises are true because of the promises fulfilled in Him.	30 Jesus is the desire of all nations. All people everywhere need Him.	31 Jesus is Faithful & True. He can't lie, He can't break His word, He can't be untrue to Who He is.				